
P059 – FOOD SAFETY & HANDLING POLICY & PROCEDURES

Purpose

District 360 aims to protect the safety and wellbeing of our participants. Therefore, we aim to have adequate procedures in place to ensure the safe handling of food.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees and volunteers and supports District 360 risk management strategy and good governance of organisational and individual risk.

Policy Statement

We aim to provide a standard of quality in the way food is handled and the level of food safety to provide a degree of protection to all persons. We aim to provide a standard of quality in the way food is clearly identified. Effective food labelling will provide a degree of protection to all persons who have access to food. High standards of hygiene will be maintained throughout all food handling, preparation, and storage.

Procedure

- All staff handling foods are required to have knowledge or skills in food handling and food safety, the organisation will ensure that proper food handling, storage and labelling is included in the organisations Orientation process.
- Purchase and Transport of food should be done considering the following:
 - Purchase foods only from a reputable, trusted supplier or retail outlet that we are confident will provide safe and suitable food.
 - Select and purchase foods that are in good condition to minimise chemicals, bacteria or pests getting in food. E.g. – packaged foods are clean, undamaged, and intact, fresh produce is clean fresh undamaged.
 - Check food is within its used by and/or best before dates
 - Transport refrigerated and frozen foods in an esky or cooler bag with ice bricks, and hot foods in an insulated container (foam box) to minimise the growth of bacteria.
 - Go straight from the supplier, retail outlet to the service kitchen to minimise the time the foods are out of temperature control.
- It is important for all staff that handle food to follow good personal health and hygiene practices so as not to compromise the safety and suitability of food. Staff should ensure that the following practices are observed, understood, and followed by staff when food is being prepared:
 - All persons handling foods must wash their hands before preparing or handling food and after using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a tissue or eating and drinking. Staff should use soap, running water and thoroughly dry their hands using a paper towel.

- Staff are not required when handling food to use gloves if correct hand washing practices have been implemented (See Food Standards Code 3.2.2). The use of gloves should not replace hand washing between activities. When gloves are used, staff are to keep them clean and intact and change them whenever they have become contaminated.
- Gloves are needed if staff have open wounds, cut or grazes, band aids, nail polish, skin conditions, jewellery, or artificial nails. Gloves must be removed, discarded, and replaced after using the toilet, smoking, coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief, eating, drinking or touching the hair, scalp or body.
- If staff have an exposed cut, sore or graze, this should be covered with a bandage, that is completely covered by a waterproof covering (e.g. – glove) when preparing food. Blue or coloured Band-Aid, to cover the wound, are available at all services if staff need a wound covering
- Hair should be tied back, or covered, when preparing food to prevent it from falling in.
- Staff should not eat, sneeze, blow or cough over unprotected food or surfaces likely to come into contact with food.
- If persons are unwell or suffering with air borne illness, they should refrain from any food preparation or handling
- Food is to be stored in a clean and hygienic manner away from chemicals.
- Dry Storage (Pantry) is to be kept off the floor in a clean and tidy area. This will discourage pests and insects. If storage areas are dirty, staff must do an extra clean. If pests are sighted, advise your supervisor, and generate an incident on Brevity.
 - Food is to be kept covered or sealed in clean containers to prevent foreign objects, pests and harmful bacteria entering the food.
- Cold storage (fridge/freezer) needs to be stored at 5 degrees or below. Staff are to check the fridge temperature regularly and inform management if fridge is not staying at optimal temperature to ensure replacement/repair.
 - Store raw foods (e.g., meat) below cooked and ready to eat foods, on bottom shelf of the fridge. This will prevent harmful bacteria in the juices from raw food dripping onto the other cooked or ready to eat food and contaminating it.
 - Foods requiring refrigeration or freezing will be stored in the refrigerator or freezer.
 - Milk is to be stored in the refrigerator and must be kept in the main section of the fridge, not on the door.
 - Fridge must have a fridge/freezer thermometer in correct working order and regularly checked to ensure correct temperatures are maintained.
- Food preparation areas are to be cleaned and sanitised prior to food preparation.
- Food preparation areas must be kept in a state of cleanliness, free from excess dust, clutter, grease and vermin.
- Thoroughly clean and sanitise chopping boards and knives between uses, if needed use colour coded chopping boards and utensils to help prevent cross contamination. Separate utensils should always be used (preferably colour coded – to further minimise potential of cross infection) used for handling raw and cooked foods.
- Fruit, vegetables and salad ingredients that are being prepared must be washed thoroughly in clean drinking quality water before cutting.
- After preparing fresh cut fruit and vegetables, serve immediately or cover and store on the top shelf of the fridge and cover until serving (on the day of preparation). Once whole fruit and vegetables are cut, they are at greater risk of harmful bacterial growth and need to be handled correctly to keep them safe. Any unused portions should be discarded at the end of the day.

- Care should be taken when preparing rough skinned fruit (e.g.: rockmelon, strawberries). It is important to wash the skins of these fruits before they are cut and observe the 4 hour /2-hour rule when preparing and serving these fruits.
- The 4 hour /2-hour rule is to be observed when preparing and serving food, and for the temperature control of potentially hazardous food. The rules have been set out by Food Standards Australia New Zealand. (2016) Appendix 2 -
- This method should be adopted, not only when preparing rough skinned fruit, but also when partaking in cooking activities with the participant and when preparing food for participant’s consumption.
- The length of time foods spent in the ‘Danger Zone’, above 5 degrees and below 60 degrees, should be minimised in order to keep food safe. As a guide if a refrigerated food or hot food has been in the temperature danger zone, the 4 hour/2 hour rule should be used.
 - 0 – 2 hours = Use immediately, or keep it stored below 5 or above 60 degrees.
 - 2 – 4 hours = Use immediately.
 - Above 4 Hours = Throw away.
- Preparation time of ingredients is included in the 4-hour time frame.
- Cooked food is to be kept separated from raw food throughout the cooking process.
- All food of animal origin will be cooked thoroughly. In the cases of meat, the juices must run clear before being removed from the heat.
- Food can only be reheated once. Preheat equipment such as ovens and grills before reheating. Stir or turn food during reheating to ensure it heats evenly. Any uneaten food left over after reheating, should be disposed of.
- Frozen food will be thawed on the bottom part of the refrigerator before cooking.
- Educators must refer to the food label for instructions on freezing foods. Foods that have been thawed must not be refrozen unless stated on the manufactures label.
- Foods from unopened cans, jars or bottles that are dented, swollen or leaking, past used by dates/best before dates or with seals that have ‘popped’ or any other foods that seem “unfresh” when opened, will not be used. - “If in doubt throw it out.”
- Tinned foods must be removed from their tin and placed in a suitable clean container.
- Prepared or opened foods must be clearly and labelled. As per following example;

Storage/Package	Labelling requirements example	Comments
If you have opened any food and removed, it from its original packaging and placed the food in another container. You must label in the following manner:	Colby Cheese Opened 02/08/2017 AM Use by date 15/05/2017. Ingredients: Milk, culture, salt. Allergens: Contains Dairy	
If you have opened any food and it is still in its original packaging. You must label in the following manner:	Opened 02/08/2017 AM	
If you have opened any jar food that is still in it’s original packaging/Jar	Opened 02/08/2016 am Use or throw away by 05/08/2017.	If in doubt throw it out

(ie Tomato paste, cheese spread). That provides instruction that it must be used with x days of opening, You must label in the following manner:		
If you have opened a tinned food and transferred to another container (ie: spaghetti, bake beans, Fruit). You must label in the following manner:	Spaghetti Opened 02/08/2017 AM Used or throw by 05/08/2017. Ingredients: (write as per label.) Allergens: Contains wheat, egg,	If in doubt throw it out. Tinned food should never be left in the tins.
Small Goods (ie Ham bacon, Frankfurt's) purchased from the deli department. You must label in the following manner	Not needed	All unused foods must be thrown away. Purchase only what is needed.
Eggs You must label in the following manner:	Not needed	If there is fewer eggs cut the carton to suit. Must re write the use by date if needed.
Cooked meats You must label in the following manner:	Beef sausages Cooked 02/08/2017 PM Use or throw away by 03/08/2017 Allergens: wheat, meat	Purchase only what is needed Throw away any meat that has been reheated.
Milk- plastic bottles	Not needed	
Milk - Long life, (ie carton or tetra pak) You must label in the following manner:	Opened 02/08/2017 AM Used or throw away by 09/08/2017	As per label "use within X days of opening"
Rough skinned Fruit Eg: Rockmelon/strawberries etc You must label in the following manner:	Date 02/08/2017 Time 2:30pm Used or throw away by 4:30pm (if left at room temperature.) Used or throw away by 6:30pm 02/08/2017 (if placed in fridge)	If Rough skinned fruit has been cut or peel & left at room temperature must be thrown away after 2 hours. (4 hour/2 hour rule)

- Education of safe food practices will be provided through online training via eTrainU.
- If food has been prepared off site or brought in by parents/families, staff or others, to share with participant, for the purpose of birthdays or programmed activities such as a party day or multi-cultural activities. It is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that the food has been handled according to policy to minimise harm to the participant in our care.

- Foods received or prepared outside the service, for participant to share, must be clearly labelled as to identify the food and how to prepare the food for consumption. Food Handlers Information Notice needs to be completed and affixed to the food.
- Where possible utensils will be used for the serving of food. Staff will encourage participant to serve themselves, for food and drinks encouraging them to develop their food handling skills as well as acknowledging their growing sense of independence.
- The service will regularly review and evaluate food handling and practices in line with current best practice guidelines from recognised authorities. ≤ Food sent from a child's home must be ready to eat. We are unable to cook, reheat or prepare food for the participant that has been sent from home.
- Staff will be advised on how to prepare, package and store participants' lunches and food so that it stays fresh in their lunch boxes when out in the community.
- Information is available to families via posters, leaflets, links on our website or in discussions on best practice for storage of participant's food brought from home
- Staff will understand all participant's allergies or food restrictions prior to food handling so that cross contamination does not occur via their formal Mealtime Management Plan provided by a health practitioner, or the Mealtime Management Support provided by their service facilitator.
- Risk minimisation strategies, identified in individual plans, will be followed to ensure that participants with allergies and intolerances are not exposed to foods that they cannot have, see Individual Support Plan (ISP).
- Food that is left over that has perished, spoilt, or passed its use by date is to be disposed of immediately.

Reporting: Incidences and failures to comply

- All District 360 staff have a requirement to report via the organisations CMS system of breaches of policy or incidences including (but not limited to)
 - Food poisoning or suspected food poisoning
 - Incorrect labelling and food storage
 - Cross contamination (or failures to prevent)
 - Unclean areas where food is prepared or cooked
 - Actual or suspected vermin or infestation.
 - Contamination of food (or its preparation area utensils) from any chemical, infectious diseases /bacteria or pathogens
 - Or any other incident / action / event that could impact on the safe preparation and or delivery of any food

District 360 will undertake any relevant investigation were appropriate and make the necessary adjustments / corrections / training (or other actions as required). This includes notification to relevant statutory authorities.

Day-to-Day Management

The person who has day-to-day responsibility for Food handling & Safety is Belinda Juhasgao, service and can be contacted on [1800 411 818](tel:1800411818) or via email belle@district360.com.au

Other relevant District 360 policies

Staff, especially managers and supervisors, are encouraged to read this policy in conjunction with other relevant District 360 policies, including.

- Employee Handbook
- P057 Mealtime Management Policy and Procedures (Inc Dysphagia)
- D360_M003_Health and Safety Handbook

Relevant Forms;

- F07 Mealtime Management Support form

Relevant legislation:

- National Standards Section 2.7(Food), 2.9.3 (Building cleanliness, maintenance and repair).
- Public Health Act.
- Food Act 2003 II Food Regulation 2015
- Food Safety Standards Australia New Zealand code 3.2.2
- Food Safety Standards Australia New Zealand code 1.2.1
- Work Health & Safety act.
- Work Health & safety regulations
- NDIS: NDIS Practice Standards and Quality Indicators
- NDIS: Practice Alert—Dysphagia, Safe Swallowing, and Mealtime Management
- International Dysphagia Diet Standardisation Initiative: Complete IDDSI Framework
- Queensland Government, Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors: Mealtime Support Resources
- New South Wales Government, Family and Community Services: Nutrition and Swallowing Procedures Tools and Templates
- Australian food safety legislation <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Series/F2008B00576>

More information

If you have a query about this policy or need more information, please contact the management team at info@district360.com.au

Review details

Approval Authority	Tanya Johnston
Responsible Officer	Coco Johnston
Approval Date	27 June 2022
Last updated Date	31 July 2024
Next Review Date*	31 July 2025
Last amended	- Updated day-to-day management contact details

**Unless otherwise indicated, this procedure will still apply beyond the review date.*

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